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OFFICE OF THE NEGRO AMERICAN LEAGUE

Chicago. There has been much said coming from all sources of the signing of Jackie Robinson, a member and star short stop of the Kansas City Monarchs (The Monarchs are a member of the Negro American League of Professional Baseball). The Negro American League wishes to join the thousands in congratulating Robinson in his step forward as well as Branch Rickey, President of the Brooklyn Dodgers for the stand he has taken in paving the way, which will allow Negroes an opportunity to advance in baseball.

The Negro American and Negro National Leagues in their separate and joint meetings have so often discussed the possibilities of Negro players getting into the major leagues, yet were never able to determine how or when it would takeplace, however, at the same time always felt that some day it would come to pass.

There has never been a feeling or thought entertained that if our players were admitted into the majors, they would go direct from our league to one of the major league clubs, but through the minors as other players have and are now doing.

The League would like to make it clear that there has never been any objection on the part of any member of the Negro American League and the Negro National League to our players advancing into the major leagues. Our leagues are like other organizations, seeking advancement. However, we feel that Mr. Rickey is too big not to compensate the Kansas City Monarchs for Jackie Robinson and there will be nothing done on our part to hinder the success of Robinson or any other Negro ball player.

We have our By-Laws and Constitution, contracts, and Gentlemen's

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Agreements which have always been carried out by the two leagues and our schedules completed. We know that our leagues have not worked on as large a scale as the majors which is due to the many difficulties and handicaps known only to the Negro Leagues. Each league has its President and maintains offices the year 'round, therefore, we feel that we have an organization.

We will admit that we do not have a commissioner, however, hope to select one in the near future. The Major Leagues elected their first commissioner in 1912, and up until that time they were considered an organization playing organized baseball.

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I have never met Mr. Rickey, but judging from his actions he must have a big heart. And too, we firmly believe, that Mr. Rickey's Scouts were instructed to find suitable ball players who had possibilities. Jackie Robinson was selected and ordered to sign a contract and was assigned to the farm club at Montreal.

Mr. Rickey said, "That the Negro Leagues were a racket", but we have never gone out and signed players without giving the owners some consideration.

J. B. Martin

President